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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [KJUS](#) [OREP](#) [ASEC](#) [ID](#)
SUBJECT: CODEL FEINGOLD MEETS TNI COMMANDER DJOKO SUYANTO

REF: A. SECSTATE 22610
[1](#)B. JAKARTA 1015 AMBASSADOR MEETS AG SALEH ON TIMIKA

Classified By: Political Officer Tim Hefner For Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) Senator Feingold called on Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI) Commander (Panglima) Air Chief Marshal Djoko Suyanto February 24. The Panglima reviewed structural reforms that the military has undertaken over the past several years and affirmed civilian control over the institution. The Panglima assured the Senator that the TNI has taken steps to remove itself from business enterprises and pledged the TNI's adherence to law and justice concerning war crimes, crimes against humanity, and the 2002 Timika incident. With respect to Timika, the Panglima said that a 21-month investigation by the FBI had found no involvement by the TNI, which would continue to cooperate in any further investigation. Senator Feingold urged accountability for the TNI specifically on events in East Timor in 1999 and the Timika case. On counterterrorism, the Panglima noted the TNI's supporting role to the Indonesian National Police but mentioned President Yudhoyono's call for an aggressive stance by the TNI against terrorism. The Panglima described Papua as not a security issue but one involving politics and public welfare. Senator Feingold encouraged the TNI commander to open the province to journalists and foreign observers. End Summary.

Senator Feingold Meet TNI Commander

[1](#)2. (U) Senator Feingold called on TNI Panglima Air Chief Marshal Djoko Suyanto February 24. The Senator was accompanied by Foreign Policy Adviser Grey Frandsen, Senate Intelligence Committee staff member Evan Gottesman, and the Ambassador. Suyanto was accompanied by his assistant for General Plans Air Vice Marshal Rio Mendung, Assistant for Intelligence and Chief of the TNI Strategic Intelligence Agency (BAIS) Major General Nurdin Zainal, and Head of Information Service Major General Kohirin Suganda. Senator Feingold opened with congratulations to the Panglima who officially took command earlier that week and thanked the commander for his friendship and cooperation. Senator Feingold said the U.S.-Indonesian bilateral relationship has become one of the most important in the world and promised to inform his colleagues in Washington about the state of the

TNI.

TNI Reforms

13. (SBU) The Panglima opened with a summary of TNI reforms that have taken place since 1998. He explained that the military focused heavily on socio-politics in the past, but in the intervening 8 years, the TNI effectively has removed itself from the political arena. The Panglima noted that TNI officers no longer hold positions within civilian GOI offices or the Parliament despite Indonesian law allowing them to do so until 2009. He added that although changing mindsets remains an institutional challenge, organizational structure and the training curriculum for officers and non-commissioned officers reflects the TNI emphasis on professionalism and national defense.

14. (SBU) Senator Feingold praised the TNI on its response to the December 26, 2004 tsunami and its implementation of the Aceh peace accords. The Panglima responded that the TNI's response to the GOI's civilian leadership's orders regarding the tsunami aftermath and the peace agreement shows that the TNI does in fact operate under the control and at the direction of civilian leadership. He noted that criminals have sparked sporadic violence in Aceh since the signing of the peace agreement and that the TNI will safeguard peace there.

TNI Financing

15. (SBU) Senator Feingold asked about TNI financing from

JAKARTA 00003482 002 OF 003

business interests, and the Panglima responded that very little funding continues to come from TNI-operated businesses, and statements that 30-40% of TNI financing came from outside sources were not true. The Panglima said that since 2004, the TNI has not been allowed to engage in new business activities, and all available information on TNI businesses has been passed to the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of State Enterprises. The sale of these businesses awaits their and several other ministries' decision on who will take over the businesses' operations. The Panglima emphasized that the TNI operates under civilian control and obeys the orders of the GOI.

TNI and the Administration of Justice

16. (SBU) Senator Feingold asked if members of TNI would be brought to justice for war crimes and crimes against humanity, and the Panglima responded that the public remains ill-informed regarding military justice issues and internal sanctions. He stated that many officers have been tried in military courts, including some involved in East Timor in 1999 and in incidents before 1998, but these cases have not been reported by the press. He added that the public can access military court decisions, but the TNI does not actively publicize its decisions. When pressed about convictions, the Panglima answered that a General, other officers, and NCOs have been convicted in military courts in recent years. Senator Feingold urged the TNI to announce such convictions for the sake of accountability and credibility and requested a copy of this information as well. The Panglima mentioned a draft law pending in Parliament which would make TNI members subject to prosecution in the civilian courts.

TNI and Counterterrorism

17. (C) Responding to the Senator's question about TNI counterterrorism efforts, the Panglima reiterated that the TNI primarily focuses on national defense. However, he added

that according to President Yudhoyono's policy, the TNI takes an active and aggressive stance in CT matters and continues to sharpen its territorial commands to safeguard the country and to cooperation with the police. He said, "On my side, I will guarantee it," that the territorial commands are not used by the GOI to control the people of Indonesia as they were under the Soeharto regime. The Panglima said that the TNI has no arrest powers and must pass any CT-related information to the Indonesian National Police (INP), the institution with primary responsibility for homeland security. He said the TNI and INP have a close working relationship, and the INP coordinates well with Malaysian and Australian authorities. The Panglima said terrorism remains a very serious problem for the GOI and a challenging fight which cannot be countered in a military-to-military manner. He added that terrorism must be fought by all parts of society. When asked about the effect U.S. military action in Iraq had on CT efforts, the Panglima said it was difficult to answer for Indonesia because the nation has a very broad spectrum of Muslims. He added that President Yudhoyono wants to make the nation a stronger moderate nation.

TNI and Timika

18. (C) Senator Feingold asked about continued TNI cooperation in the investigation of the 2002 attack in Timika which resulted in the death of 2 American citizens including the husband of Patsy Spier (Ref B). The Panglima stated that his predecessor invited the FBI to participate in the investigation because of his concerns that the TNI had been implicated publicly in the attack. After 21 months, the FBI had concluded the TNI was not involved in the attack. The FBI handed over the results of the investigation to the TNI which in turn gave the information to the INP. The Panglima said the INP and the Attorney General's Office continue to work together on the cases against the 8 who will soon stand trial, and he added that FBI involvement in the case added credibility to the investigation. The Panglima added that if future evidence suggested TNI involvement in the Timika

JAKARTA 00003482 003 OF 003

incident, those implicated would be brought to justice.

Papua

19. (SBU) On Papua, the Panglima said the problem is not one of security, but one of politics and public welfare. He added that few TNI soldiers are stationed in the area, and their function is to guard the borders. The TNI has faced accusations of wrongdoings in Papua, but the Panglima said these are political statements, such as those by 42 Papuans seeking refugee status in Australia who claimed the TNI tortured them. The Panglima also recounted an incident where three locals demanded payment from TNI soldiers for passage over a bridge. The soldiers refused to pay the illegal tax, a conflict ensued, and the soldiers shot the three locals. One officer stood trial in a military court for illegally discharging a weapon, but media outlets did not cover this aspect of the case. Senator Feingold urged the Panglima to allow journalists and independent observers access to the area.

10. This message was cleared by Codel Feingold.
PASCOE